



FROM THE DESK OF THE DDSN MEDICAL CONSULTANT

HEAT RELATED ILLNESS

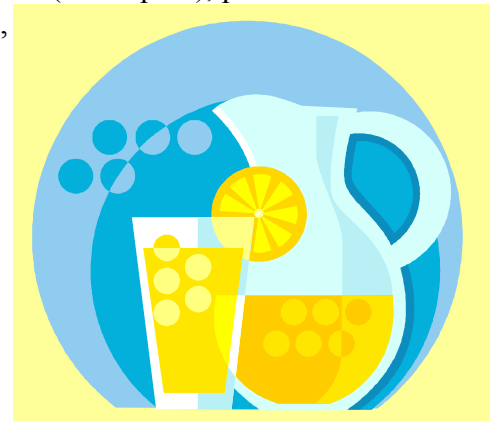
Summer is here and we are having higher temperatures outside. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has just released the records for heat-related deaths from 1979-2002. They report an average of 204 persons die in the USA each year from the effects of extreme hot weather. The two groups that most likely to suffer are the persons over 65 years old and persons with disabilities. Therefore, we need to take extra care of the persons that we serve. Some of the ways we can help are to reduce the time the person spends in the heat by:

- ✚ Avoid outside between the hours of 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM if possible;
- ✚ Use air conditioning on high temperature days;
- ✚ Do not exercise in hot conditions; and,
- ✚ NEVER leave a person in a stationary car in hot weather. Even 5-10 minutes, temperatures can rise to levels that can kill.

Other ways are to provide enough fluids to drink. In hot weather our body sweats so that as perspiration evaporates it cools us. This uses our body water and it needs replacement. If we do not have enough fluid we can get weak, quiet or irritable, sick to our stomach and have aches and pains and feel dizzy. If the water is not replaced, this can lead to collapse with possible damage to brain, kidneys, heart and even death.

Please be sure that you and the persons you care for:

- ✚ Break frequently for fluid if you are working or playing in the heat.
- ✚ Allow 2-3 glasses of 8 ounces of water each hour if a person is active on a hot day.
- ✚ Avoid alcohol or caffeine – water is best. But sports drinks containing electrolytes and sugar in moderation are also good.
- ✚ Be extra careful if a person is on diuretics (water pills), pills that help with diarrhea or urine control, or pills for psychiatric treatments or are diabetic – ASK Your health team for advice.



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Protect the skin. In hot weather we are tempted to uncover for the sun. Please be careful – too much sun burns, increases water loss, and increases the chance of later skin cancer. Please:

- + Reduce the time in the sun
- + Use natural shade and clothes to protect you
- + Use sun block

In Australia, they say:



Slip on a shirt



Slap on a hat



Slop on Sunscreen

ENJOY summer action, but please, guard both the persons you care for and yourself from the danger of heat and sun by using these suggestions to reduce the risks.



Summer Care:

Cover up!

Use Sunscreen!

Drink Water!

Buddy Swim!

Wear a Hat!

AND.....

HAVE FUN!!

